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The HEAVENLY PRIEST OF OUR LORD

A review of the Bible
with special reference to
developments in Teaching
and Ritual

By W. L. PAIGE COX,

Archdeacon of Chester and
of Chester Cathedral

*Second Edition, with an Appendix
to some criticisms*

BASIL BLACKWELL
OXFORD

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE WORD AND SACRAMENTS

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(The object of these sermons, with the notes appended to them, is to shew how the doctrinal position of the Church of England, as set forth in the Prayer Book and Articles, is substantiated by our modern knowledge.)

BASIL BLACKWELL, OXFORD.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The issue of a second edition of this pamphlet has provided the writer with the opportunity of dealing in an appendix with some criticisms, which have not called for any alteration of the text of the pamphlet but have suggested some confirmatory and explanatory observations in continuance of the main argument.

It is thought that the appendix will increase the interest and value of the pamphlet, especially as, in putting together the additional matter, the writer has had the advantage of consultation with some of our leading scholars. He has, indeed, owed so much to the comments and advice of others that the publication as a whole might be spoken of as a co-operative product, representing the convictions not merely of this or that section of the Church but of a large number of the main body. If the names of those who have thus assisted the writer are not mentioned, it is because he feels that he must and should assume the sole responsibility for every statement he has made and for the general process of the reasoning.

CHESTER,

October, 1929.

THE HEAVENLY PRIESTHOOD OF OUR LORD

I.

THE Public Orator of Cambridge, Dr. T. R. Glover, in an address delivered last year on "The Influence of Greece on Human Life," took occasion to refer to the eventful publication by Erasmus, in 1516, of his edition of the Greek Testament. He instanced the change in thought on a gravely important subject produced by a discernment of the right meaning of the Greek word *μετανοεῖν* in St. Matthew iii. 2, which was rendered in Jerome's Latin translation, the Vulgate, by *poenitentiam agite*. "The Greek *μετανοεῖν*," said Dr. Glover, "did not mean *facere poenitentiam*. 'Do penance,' the Church had said with Jerome, giving the phrase generation by generation a more mechanical significance; 'think again'! said the Greek;—what a difference"! "The Latin version," he added, "was relegated to those who knew no Greek, to those who feared the new life, to those who preferred ignorance and darkness; but the peoples of Europe, in Luther's German and Tyndale's English, got at the heart of the divine oracles, and first the religious life of the world, and gradually the political, because a new thing."¹

There are some renderings by Jerome of passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews which are as noticeable from their doctrinal significance as those to which Dr. Glover calls attention. Take, for instance, the Vulgate

¹*Proceedings of the Hellenic Travellers' Club, 1928, page 14.*

translation of Hebrews i. 3. In our Authorized Version the passage runs, "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." In the R.V. it is, more exactly, "When he had made purification of sins, sat down, etc." The tenses are in the past, as in the Greek, *καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος* and *ἐκάθισεν*. In the Vulgate the rendering is, *purgationem peccatorum faciens, sedit ad dexteram*, "making purification of sins, he sat." That is in the edition of the Latin by Bishop Wordsworth and Dr. White. In the Clementine, the authorized Roman, version, it is *sedet ad dexteram*, emphasizing still more the suggestion of a present continuous action—"making purification of sins, he sitteth."

Bishop Westcott, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, remarks on this error in the Vulgate, which, as he points out, is avoided in the Old Latin version. In the "New Commentary," just published under the auspices of the English Church Union, it is suggested that the Vulgate rendering should be taken as a possible alternative to that in our versions. "Either the purification in this verse is regarded as a completed act, or the aorist participle (having made), must be translated by a present 'making purification, he sat.' " It must be left to Greek scholars to determine what is the force of the aorist in this place. Most Greek scholars, with Bishop Westcott, will have no doubt on the subject.

Turning now to Hebrews x. 11. 12, we notice that it is rendered thus in our Revised Version, "Every priest standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins : but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." The A.V.

corresponds. Both give a literal rendering of the Greek, *αὐτὸς δὲ μίαν ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν προσενέγκας θυσίαν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Θεοῦ*. The Greek marks emphatically the contrast between the continual “ministering and offering” by “every priest” and the completed offering by “Him” of one sacrifice for sins. The Vulgate translation is, *Hic autem unam pro peccatis offerens hostiam in sempiternum sedit*. In the Douay Bible, the English translation of the Vulgate made at Douay, this is rendered, “But this man offering one sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth on the right hand of God.” Here the contrast is ignored or nullified, and the assertion is that the sacrifice for sins was not an act completed once for all, but is continually going on.

The note on this passage in the “New Commentary” is, “‘For ever’ may go either with ‘offered’ or with ‘sat.’ (R.V.m.)¹ If the translation ‘had offered’ is correct, the words regard the priestly offering in heaven as completed with the moment of entry and followed by the session. As in i. 3, it is grammatically possible to translate ‘offering one sacrifice for ever,’ but the contrast is against this interpretation.” We may turn from this comment to that of St. Chrysostom, the most illustrious of the Greek Fathers. His words, with reference to Ch. vii. are, “When therefore you hear that He is a priest, do not think that He is always exercising priesthood : for once for all He exercised the priestly function, and after that He took His seat—for it belongs not to a minister to sit, but to stand.” And again, on Ch. x. 11, “So then standing is a sign of ministering, therefore sitting is a sign of being ministered to.”²

¹Bishop Gibson, in his *Thirty Nine Articles*, page 690, refers to Bishop Westcott as supporting the punctuation of A.V. and R.V. (text).

²In *Ep. ad Heb.*, Hom. xiii ; *Opera*, Tom. xii. 191 f.

We must glance at just one more passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews in which the Vulgate gives a different tense from the Greek. This passage (Hebrews viii. 3.) is thus rendered in our R.V.,—"Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is necessary that this high priest also have somewhat to offer." In the Greek, the latter part of the verse is, ὅθεν ἀναγκαῖον ἔχειν τι καὶ τοῦτον ὃ προσενέγκη. In the Vulgate it is, *unde necesse est et hunc habere aliquid quod offerat*, "wherefore it is necessary that he also should have something to offer" (Douay Version). There is no ἐστὶ in the Greek. Various authorities, ancient and modern, supply ἦν with ἀναγκαῖον. "It was necessary that he should have something to offer." St. Thomas Aquinas has, *Quia vero necesse fuit Christum habere quod offeret; ipse seipsum obtulit*, "because it was necessary that Christ should have something to offer; He offered Himself," putting the transaction entirely into the past. To render the aorist προσενέγκη by the present suggests a contradiction to the express statement in Hebrews ix. 25, οὐδ' ἵνα πολλάκις προσφέρῃ ἑαυτόν, which passage is conclusive as to the "One Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross." (Article xxxi.) "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often; as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (24-26, R.V.). It is stated here that Christ offered Himself by "suffering." That makes impossible a continual offering of Himself. "He cannot offer Him-

self now," the writer to the Hebrews would say, "because he cannot suffer; He has 'the power of an endless life'."

A review of these passages is of very special interest just now, as we are hearing so much of a doctrine that Christ is continually offering Himself to the Father and that the Sacrament of the Holy Communion is the earthly counterpart of that offering. That doctrine is being taught in various manuals circulated for general use, and is put before uninstructed lay people as though it were incontrovertible. Yet the Church of England knows nothing of such a doctrine. To ordinary folk it is quite irreconcilable with Article XXXI. There is no hint of it in the Prayer Book; and it is certainly not Catholic in the proper sense of the term, as having been held "always and by all." As Bishop Thirlwall has remarked, even if it were the fact that Christ is continually offering Himself in Heaven, we should have no authority for thinking that the object of the Holy Eucharist was that we should make the same offering on earth. "There is no logical sequence. There is not a word in the Communion Service to suggest such an opinion. It does not turn our thoughts to any transaction in the heavenly sanctuary, but to that which took place in the Guest-Chamber in Jerusalem."¹

In the "New Commentary" an attempt is made to find some Scriptural authority for this novel doctrine of the Eucharist. The commentator on the Epistle to the Hebrews, relying apparently on the support to be

¹*Charges*, ii. 245. Compare the judgment of that other eminent scholar and thinker, Dr. Hort. "The idea expressed in the hymn, 'Still His prevailing death He pleads,' has no Apostolic warrant and cannot even be reconciled with Apostolic doctrine. The Bible seems to me to teach us to think of the Atonement as a thing done 'once for all.' What is said of intercession seems to belong simply to the presenting of human prayers as the Head of the race." (*Life*, Vol. ii. 213.)

derived from the Vulgate renderings, goes so far as to say that the Epistle "varies between the two conceptions" of the "offering as regarded as a single act completed as soon as the Lord entered the heavenly sanctuary" and the "self oblation as an ever present fact, a perpetual offering."¹ Our readers, by noting the Vulgate renderings, are in a position to judge for themselves of this alleged uncertainty in the mind of the sacred writer. Against such a supposition of uncertainty there is to be set the whole tenor of the great argument of the Epistle so cogent and consistent throughout.

"The acknowledged object of the Epistle is to reconcile Christian Jews to the approaching abolition of the Mosaic priesthood and ritual. It was composed with a view to fortify them against the shock, which their cherished sentiments and prejudices were destined to undergo, by the coming destruction of their city and temple. But if the worship of the Christian Church were indeed, as is alleged, the reproduction and the anti-type of the worship which had for long centuries been offered on the holy hill of Sion, how better could the writer of the Epistle have quieted the apprehensions, and restored the confidence of his Jewish brethren, than by assuring them that this was really the case? Is it conceivable that if so weighty an argument had been within his reach, he would have neglected altogether to avail himself of it? He might have said, 'The priests of the Order of Aaron are about indeed to pass away; but the Christian priests, who are their proper successors, minister in every Christian assembly. The sacrifices that can never take away sins will cease for ever, but the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, the sacrifice of the

¹Page 600.

Body and Blood of Christ, not indeed repeated, for that can never be, but re-presented, is "done" for a memorial of Him, whenever the bread is broken and the wine poured out in obedience to His command.'

"All this could have been said, and yet so far from its forming, as if it had been true it must have done, the staple of the argument, we look in vain from one end of the Epistle to the other for a word or a hint upon which such a construction can with certainty be put. Christian Ministers are three times spoken of in the chapter in which the one disputed expression occurs; but each time they are called, not 'priests,' but 'your leaders,' 'they that have the rule over you.' One only Priest stands forth alone in His Ministry, like the Jewish High Priest on the day of Atonement, 'the High Priest of our Profession,' Jesus, the Son of God. Sacrifices are enjoined in the context in which the words 'we have an altar' occur. But they are not the celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ re-presented on the altars of the Christian Church, but 'the sacrifice of praise to God continually,' and the 'doing good and communicating,' with which and such-like sacrifices He is well pleased.' The worship and the privileges of the Christian Church are more than once alluded to in the course of the Epistle, but in no such allusion is the idea of Christ's priestly action in heaven being imitated and repeated by His priests on earth to be discovered."¹

But the evidence of the Epistle to the Hebrews, rightly weighed and considered, does not stand by itself. It is supported by the entire silence of the rest of the New Testament as to any sacrificial offering in

¹*Our High Priest in Heaven*, by Archdeacon T. T. Perowne, D.D., Third Edition, pp. 80-83.

It is important to note that the function of the High Priest in the Holy of Holies was solitary and exclusive. It could not be shared by any priest.

Heaven or any relation of the Holy Communion to such an offering. Surely we might have looked to St. Paul, if to anyone, for explicit teaching on a subject like this. But he has nothing at all to say upon it. He shows us clearly that by the death of Christ we are reconciled, by the blood of Christ we are justified ; but not a word does he let fall concerning reconciliation or justification as resulting from any offering of Christ or of His blood in the true Holy of Holies. " We have the living Christ set before us ; we have His present work in heaven alluded to. It is His present work for us. But it is making intercession for us, not offering sacrifice for us. How can this omission be accounted for, except by allowing that St. Paul could have known nothing of such a sacrificial oblation in heaven ? " ¹

There have been those who have spoken of St. Peter as the High Churchman among the Apostles. It would seem that, in early days at any rate, he had more affinities than had St. Paul with the Judaistic party in the Church. Yet when we search his Epistle to the " sojourners of the dispersion," the object of which was to fortify them by a reminder of the fundamental precepts and hopes of Christianity, he has nothing to say to them about a self-offering of Christ in Heaven having its counterpart in the priestly action of His Ministers on earth.² On the contrary, the Apostle speaks in peculiarly impressive terms of the whole body of God's elect as " a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ "—to offer not a propitiatory sacrifice, not " a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ," but " spiritual " sacrifices, as distinguished from the offerings of the Law, such sacri-

¹*Our One Priest on High*, by N. Dimock, Memorial edition, p. 45.

²On the hypothesis of the non-Petrine authorship of the Epistle its concurrence on this subject with the other New Testament books would be almost equally significant.

fices " as spirit offers to spirit, and a holy priesthood to a holy God,"¹ the sacrifices repeatedly alluded to in the New Testament as becoming to Christians, and offered through Jesus Christ.

We are told that the non-Christian Jews themselves were in St. Peter's time in process of being prepared to take the Christian view of sacrifice. As A. Johanan said,—“ After the destruction of Jerusalem there still remained a means of propitiation equal to the sacrifices . . . the rendering of loving kindnesses.” (Quoted by I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*. Second Series, p. 197).

The forward movement then in the direction of laying stress on real and personal sacrifices—the outcome of much devout thought and earnest altruistic effort—instead of on substitutory offerings intended to change the mood or disposition of the divine being had its manifestation in early days outside the Christian Church. But before long there was retrogression, as has happened so repeatedly in religious history. With the ever increasing influx of Gentiles into the Church there was a wholesale infiltration into the Christian community of pagan ideas. As Bishop Lightfoot has pointed out in his famous essay, the heathen were “ familiar with auguries, lustrations, and sacrifices, and were dependent on the intervention of some priest for all the manifold rites of the state, the club and the family, so that sacerdotal functions must have occupied a far larger place in the affairs of every-day life than for the Jew of the Dispersion.”²

Under this influence it was natural that in course of time an analogy should suggest itself between the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons and the three

¹1 Peter ii. 5. “ International Critical Commentary.”

²*The Christian Ministry*. p. 123.

ranks of the Levitical priesthood, and that Jewish terms, ignored and set aside in such a connexion in the teaching of the New Testament, should be applied to the Christian Ministry. This has been noticed as an instance of the error to which men have been so prone of placing the whole of the Bible on the same level of authority, without a recognition of moral and theological advance in the course of the centuries. It has been compared with the *penchant* shown by the combatant Puritans of the Seventeenth Century for the Old Testament narratives of battle and slaughter and for the imprecatory expressions in some of the Psalms.

With this reaction in a Judaistic direction there went a relapse towards an earlier Jewish thought of God with which pagan conceptions of deity readily associated themselves. A striking parallel has been drawn between the representations of the tortures of the damned depicted over the west doors of many mediaeval churches, and the descriptions of such tortures in the Jewish Apocryphal writings, such as the Book of Enoch.¹ The God who, so to speak, stood behind those pictures was, "a mixture of good and evil"—certainly pitiless beyond ordinary humanity to-day and "hostile even to much that was best in man."² It was for the worship of such a God that the Mass came to be elaborated. The supreme act of religion then had to consist in the averting of the wrath of this God by the re-offering or the re-presentation to Him of the sacrifice of His Son.

It is easy to see how this retrogression from the true Christian doctrine of God—the God "Who was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself"—lent itself to, even so far as perhaps to suggest, St. Jerome's trans-

¹See *The Lord of Thought*, by L. Dougal and C. W. Emmet, p. 27.

²*Ibid* p. 39.

lations, which speak of the continual offering of Himself by Christ ; while these passages, harmonizing so exactly with the doctrine and ritual of the Mass, would tend to substantiate and stereotype what was thus implied concerning Christ's High Priestly office.

The great gain of the Reformation was a recovery of the doctrine of the divine Fatherhood, and of a proper sense of the efficacy of Christ's death as the means of our reconciliation to God. Yet men still depended largely for a while on the Vulgate for their knowledge of Holy Scripture, and there persisted in consequence in some quarters—even indeed, after the English versions came into use—a notion that Christ was perpetually offering Himself in Heaven. There are expressions to be met with in the writings of some of the Caroline divines, for instance, which speak of the continual renewal of “ a once offered pure and perfect sacrifice ; ” but these expressions have not the support of the more exact Biblical exegesis to which we have attained in our day, nor do they fit in with our more matured knowledge of the Divine will and character as revealed in Nature as well as in the New Testament. They are no more to be quoted as substantiating the doctrine of the perpetually offered sacrifice than are the inevitably Fundamentalist views, as they would now be called, of these divines of an earlier day to be quoted in opposition to the approved results of modern science and criticism.

There are two great truths which we have gained of late, to which all our worship must be adapted. One is that propitiation is no device for inducing a reluctant deity to forgive. That is essentially the pagan view. The other is that in the Christian scheme propitiation is the way by which the Father in Heaven restores His sinning children to Himself. “ The action of which in some

sense God is Himself the object has God Himself as its origin."¹

II.

What is to be said now of the revival of the Vulgate teaching and of the worship corresponding to it? It takes the form in all parts of the country of the adoption of the "Sung Eucharist," of which the distinctive feature is the "offering of the sacrifice." The "Mass vestments" are worn at this service; various ceremonies from the Canon of the Mass, condemned in the Report of the Royal Commission, 1906, as illegal and inconsistent with the doctrine of the Church of England, are in use: the general effect of the service is that of the Mass, and indeed in many places it is described as the Mass; and the worshippers are schooled to follow with close attention the ritual performances at the altar, while communion is discouraged! Perhaps we may see in this a survival of the notion, so marked in primitive and pagan religion, that the efficacy of the sacrifice depends on the correctness of the ritual. The "Sung Eucharist" is thrown open to any and all as spectators and is celebrated at a time when as many as possible may be present, the hour being prohibitively late for fasting Communion, which nevertheless is taught to be "a rule of the Church"—a rule, by the way, which, as an early writer perceived, would condemn Christ Himself.²

This is the most noticeable development in the Church of England of recent years, and it is pivotal in

¹See *The Tests of Life*, by Robert Law, p. 62—a most illuminating study of the First Epistle of St. John.

²See *The Anglo-Catholic Sung Eucharist: A Study in Devotional Development*, by the Venerable Archdeacon Thorpe, B.D., 2d. net. (The Church Book Room.) See also the Report on Fasting Communion of the Committee of the Upper House of the Convocation of York, reprinted in *Anglican Essays*, p. 310.

the new so-called "Anglo-Catholic" system. Apparently a leading aim in the revision of the Communion Office in the Deposited Book has been to provide for the "Sung Eucharist." This has been assumed in the Church of Rome, where it has been said that in case of a *rapprochement* of the Church of England to Rome the alternative canon would be sanctioned as adapted to the Mass, though our present canon could not.

Not infrequently those persons have been spoken of as narrow, churlish, and obscurantist who do not approve of this new form of service. They should, it is said, be ready to agree to its use by those to whom it may be preferable to the old. Even some, including Bishops, whose private convictions are decisively on the side of the doctrinal implications of the old service rather than of the new, have used sharply disdainful language of the very large number of persons, forming indeed a majority of the main body of Churchpeople, who have opposed themselves to the authorization of the new canon.

In extenuation of such behaviour it may be supposed that those who have allowed themselves to indulge in it have not suffered as others have suffered. It is not a question, as they would seem to have imagined, of permitting a certain section of Churchpeople to worship in their own way, it is rather a question of permitting those persons to compel other Churchpeople to worship as they would have them worship.

This is the sort of thing that has been happening all over the country. A "Sung Eucharist" of the type just described has been set up, say, in a parish church or in a cathedral. A parishioner, or it may be a canon of a cathedral, of moderate views, we will suppose—to take an average instance—who has been accustomed to the

Communion Service with an occasional choral accompaniment as provided for in our present office, has found himself obliged to attend a " Sung Eucharist " in place of such a service. He has been most anxious to keep up his full association in Holy Communion with his fellow parishioners or his colleagues on the chapter, but after repeated attempts he has found himself compelled to refrain from taking part in the " Sung Eucharist " ; he has not been able to relate such a service in his own mind to the sacred meal in the Upper Room ; it is suggestive to him of a conception of a divine being which he cannot harmonize with the New Testament doctrine of God. So far from his being edified by such a service, or being brought through it into closer spiritual union with his fellow-worshippers, it has grievously troubled and saddened him, and he has thus been driven away, as a communicant, from the place where he ought to worship and where he has the fullest right to be able to worship in accordance with the doctrine and discipline of Christ " as this Church and Realm hath received the same."

Max Müller, in his *Autobiography*, describes the amazement felt by him on his coming to England, at the spectacle of religious disputes having no intelligible connection with religion. His words come back to memory as one contemplates this new development in worship. What, one is fain to ask, in so far as it departs from the doctrine and ritual of our present Prayer Book, has it to do with the religion of Jesus Christ ? What authority is there for it in the teaching and practice of Jesus Christ Himself ? How far does it tend to promote those fundamental things in life and conduct—" judgment, mercy, and faith "—which He always put in the first place ? How is the policy which pushes it forward, without

regard to the rights and feelings of others, conformable with His express words in which he gives warning of the valuelessness of devotional feeling and expression apart from conduct? "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice." How does it stand the supreme test of accordance with His High-priestly Prayer "that they may all be one."? Is it not a condemnatory count against this new policy and propaganda that it breaks into and, in effect, nullifies the *Koinonia*? It directly frustrates the ultimate aim set before the Christian Church of bringing all mankind together in one Holy Fellowship. It divides Christians at the very service at which they were intended to realize their communion with God and with one another.

Certainly of late this new development has plunged the whole Church of England into confusion and disunion. It is separating members of the Church off sharply into distinct camps, and is causing an immense waste of energy on internal controversy which should be expended on missionary enterprise at home and abroad. It is making much more remote the possibility of a response to the Lambeth "Appeal to all Christian People" to consider the ways and means of reunion. Have we not been informed lately by a leader among our Nonconformist brethren, Dr. Vernon Bartlet, that the alternative canon, if adopted by lawful authority in the Church of England, would "add an insuperable hindrance to reunion for Evangelical Nonconformists."?

What is yet more serious is that this new doctrinal development and its accessories in worship are tending

greatly to alienate from organized Christianity in this country the great mass of thoughtful people. It is being lamented, chiefly in the new "Anglo-Catholic" school, that the people of England are "drifting away from God." Is it so, to anything like the degree that is supposed? The name of Jesus Christ was never so venerated as it is now. There never was a greater readiness to accept His teaching about God and about life. The God represented by the Mass can indeed have little or no attractiveness for the men of our day. But the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, if He is truly put before them in the light of His Perfect Justice and Infinite Love, must draw all men unto Him; for "we needs must love the highest when we see it."

When Richard Hooker launched his great work, *The Ecclesiastical Polity*, he prefaced it with this appeal to the Puritans with whom he had been in reluctant controversy,—“The best and safest way for you, my dear brethren, is, to call your deeds past to a new reckoning, to re-examine the cause ye have taken in hand, and to try it even point by point, argument by argument, with all the diligent exactness ye can . . . Sift impartially your own hearts, whether it be force of reason or vehemency of affection, which hath bred and still doth feed these opinions in you . . . If truth do anywhere manifest itself, acknowledge the greatness thereof, and think it your best victory when the same doth prevail over you. Far more comfort it were for us (so small is the joy we take in these strifes) to labour under the same yoke, to live as if our persons being many our souls were but one, rather than in such dismembered sort to spend our few and wretched days in a tedious prosecuting of wearisome contentions.”

Some of us, though on an immeasurably lower plane,

would be fervently thankful if there were any possibility of any such appeal made in a similar spirit receiving attention from those Churchmen of to-day who are of the opposite school to the old Puritans. We would wish, with all personal respect for them and in all sincerity, to suggest to them that they should reconsider the ground of the doctrine on which they are staking so much. We have searched the manuals and pamphlets they are circulating so freely and we cannot find in them any surer basis for their teaching than that of assumption and imaginative deduction and reference to detached expressions of this or that divine of a less enlightened period than the present. We would bring under the notice of our brethren that the whole question of the heavenly Priesthood of our Lord has been exhaustively dealt with in treatises which we would submit they should read with care before determining to carry on their propaganda at all costs. There are, for instance, the Hulsean Lectures on *Our High Priest in Heaven*, by Archdeacon T. T. Perowne, D.D., which have been before the public for the last thirty years and of which it has been said that they are "unanswered and unanswerable." There is the very careful and candid study of the controverted passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews by that eminent New Testament scholar, N. Dimock, in his *Our One Priest on High*. And there is the compendious historical review of the doctrine of *The Heavenly Session of Our Lord*,¹ by Canon Arthur J. Tait, D.D.

In commending such books to general study we would specially plead with our self-styled "Anglo-Catholic" brethren—if we speak so of them it is because we also claim the title ourselves—that they would

¹It is to be desired that this book, which is of so great interest at the present time, should be reprinted in cheaper form.

weigh all the powerful evidence for the solid position in which the doctrine set forth in the Prayer Book and Articles is entrenched, against the uncertainty, to say the least, of that on which they are laying such uncompromising stress.

We would assure our brethren that we are entirely with them in their desire to make much of the Holy Service in which we commemorate the sacrifice of the death of Christ and the benefits which we receive thereby. We are minded, as they are, to clothe the service with every due attribute of solemnity and dignity. We go farther than they in wishing to see immense gatherings of devout Churchpeople all partaking together of the sacred feast. We can contemplate gatherings of this kind with the choicest musical accessories in the most august surroundings, with, say, the Bishop, attended by his presbyters, standing behind the Holy Table looking westward as in the old days. It would be a glorious and an inspiring thing to have such periodical reminders and assurances of our fellowship in Christ.

Further, we would certify our brethren that we are as anxious as they can be that the service of Holy Communion should be in the fullest and most proper sense "a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." We differ from them in our desire to attach to the service that higher conception of sacrifice only which is taught us in the New Testament—not viewing it as a means of re-offering or re-presenting before God in a propitiatory way the Divine Victim Who offered Himself "once for all"; but making it a supreme occasion for offering our own devout prayers and praises and gifts, culminating in our oblation of our selves, our souls and bodies, in Him and through Him, Who died for us and rose again, and ever liveth to make intercession for us.¹

¹An essential feature of the service as "a sacrifice of praise and

If we demur to the view that Christ is ever engaged in placating the Father by the continual offering of His sacrifice before Him, we yield to none of our brethren in magnifying the High Priestly office of Christ. We accept as fully as they could do the deduction from Hebrews viii. 3, that, "as every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices," so Christ as our High Priest is ever offering our "gifts and sacrifices"—our prayers, our thanksgivings, our works of love, our selves our souls and bodies.

Most mysterious yet most abundantly proved is the efficacy of intercessory prayer ; and it reaches its perfection in Him Who ever in the days of His flesh prayed for His disciples, and ever intercedes for them still. It is "no pleading of a suppliant that we attribute to Him, no dealing of a priest with sacrifice, but the calm request as of an equal, the undoubting prosecution of a rightful claim." There can be no thought in reference to such intercession of "a process of persuasion acting on a reluctant will." It must be in entire conformity with our Lord's own saying, "In that day ye shall ask (*αἰτήσεσθε*,) in my name : and I say not unto you, That I will make request (*ἐρωτήσω*) of the Father for you : for the Father himself loveth you."¹ The Father's love and the Son's love towards us are the same ; but that does not exclude all necessity or possibility of mediation and intercession. "The all-forgiving love of the Father is like the waves of a great reservoir, pulsing and throbbing against the

thanksgiving" is the partaking of the sacred gifts. "As often as ye *eat this bread and drink the cup*, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come." We please God and show our gratitude to Him by receiving what, in His love and mercy, He offers us. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me ? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." Ps. cxvi. 12, 13.

¹St. John xvi. 26, 27.

barrier until the flood-gate is opened ; when instantly the pent-up waters are sent bounding along the dried-up channel. That opening is, from the human side, repentance and confession ; but if New Testament teaching is unanimous on any point, it is regarding this, that from the Divine side also an opening of the flood-gate is needed, and that this is effected through Christ.”¹ His love is the Divine love in action on our behalf, the Divine love identifying itself with us and upholding us in our approach to the Holiest.

No, we do not desire in any sense and in any way to take from the High Priestly dignity, or to depreciate the constant mediatorial work of Him Who is our eternal Advocate with the Father. We acknowledge that it is only through Him that the obstacle to our fellowship with the Father is removed. We thank God, and should thank God continually, especially in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, for “ His tender mercy in giving His only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption and for the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice that was there made for the sins of the whole world.” And we acknowledge that we are not entitled or able to draw near to God in a complete reconciliation except as members of Christ and by virtue of what Christ has done and is doing for us.

Can we not unite in this belief and in this attitude ? Seeing that we have in common “a great High Priest Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,” can we not together “come boldly unto the throne of grace,” and serve and worship our loving God in a true and hearty fellowship ?

¹*The Tests of Life*, p. 169.

APPENDIX.

SOME CRITICISMS AND THE ANSWERS TO THEM.

Over a wide area, and even in unexpected quarters, the pamphlet has met with general assent, for which the writer is thankful, as it gives promise of increasing agreement in "the truth of God's Holy Word" in its bearing on the Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord.

Some criticisms that have appeared in the Church press are of slight account because couched in supercilious and abusive language—a fairly sure indication of weakness of conviction in the critics and of a consequent desire to depreciate the personal authority, such as it may be, of a writer and so to divert attention from his arguments. I have received, however, some very courteous and carefully written letters from scholars of high position, which have been helpful as requiring me to look still more closely into some questions of exegesis and to consider points of view rather different from those which I had in mind in writing the pamphlet.

THE VULGATE RENDERINGS.

There has been a faint challenge of the allusions to the Vulgate renderings of the passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews which have been dealt with in the text. On being asked by one correspondent whether I was correct in speaking of "this error in the Vulgate" (p. 4), my reply was "Your question led me to consider whether by some circumlocution I might avoid such a blunt expression. With this in mind I chanced to turn for the first time to Alford on Heb. i. 3. This is what he says, 'Observe the mistake of the Vulgate in rendering ποιησάμενος *faciens*. The purification is completed before the action next described takes place . . . sat down.' " We have, of course, to remember, in judging of the Vulgate, the defectiveness of Latin participles, but, as Bishop Westcott has pointed out, the difficulty in translating Heb. i. 3, was got over in the Old Latin by the phrase *purificatione peccatorum facta*. It may be mentioned here that the misleading character of Jerome's rendering of this passage was recognized by some mediaeval expositors such as Thomas, Lyranus, Cajetan, Estius, Ribera, and Cornelius A. Lapide.¹

¹See *The Heavenly Session of our Lord*, by Canon Tait, p. 134.

With reference to the rendering of the aorist in our A.V. and R.V. I have been told by way of a reminder that the Revisers paid more attention to classical than to Hellenistic Greek. That may be, but it is admitted on all hands that the Greek of the Epistle to the Hebrews is more classical than that of any other book of the New Testament. Deissmann speaks of the Epistle as "historically the earliest example of Christian artistic literature," and again as "like an intruder among the New Testament company of popular books," (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 237, 243.) Dr. J. H. Moulton tells us that "in both educated and uneducated vernacular, differences show themselves less in grammar than in vocabulary and orthography." In his *Grammar of New Testament Greek* he mentions that the aorist, in Hellenistic as in classical Greek, has a "punctiliar" action, that is, it regards action "as a *point*," not like the present "as *durative*." "It represents the point of entrance (Ingressive) or that of completion (Effective), or it looks at a whole action simply as having occurred, without distinguishing any steps in its progress (Constative)." p. 109.

Certainly the rendering of the aorist in our versions of the Epistle to the Hebrews conforms to these rules. On this subject I have fortified my own judgment by consultation with two or three eminent scholars. One of these, a Divinity Professor, says, "If the writer of the Epistle meant a continuous and present action, why did he vary his tenses? Having said *φέρων* why did he go on with *ποησάμενος*?" Another says, "It is, of course, familiar to us all that the Greek aorist has three uses, and that we have to discover which is the English equivalent in a particular passage. But Heb. i. gives us a distinct lead for the whole Epistle, *ὅς ὦν . . . φερὼν τε . . . ποιησάμενος . . . γενόμενος*. The distinction is clear between what Christ is and is doing, and what He has done. There is a use of words here which is utterly misleading if the aorist is to be translated as a present. Also this one passage covers your whole point. It would seem fair to say that the use of the aorist participle on the whole in the Epistle is carefully related to the past, and that, in the passages with which you are concerned, to translate it by a present is to treat the author as careless on the points where care was most needed." The same correspondent writes later, "I have rather hastily gone through the Epistle, marking, I think, all 1st Aor. Act. and Middle participles. You will find that with one possible exception they all refer to a past event, and seem to be specifically chosen for this purpose. The case of the 1st Aor. Part. passive is

rather different, though it would yield very similar results. No impartial scholar would maintain that the result of the enquiry is unimportant or can be set aside on grounds of Hellenistic Greek."¹

It certainly cannot be said of Dr. James Moffatt that he is not thoroughly conversant with Hellenistic Greek. He is the commentator on Hebrews in the "International Critical Commentary" series. This is how he translates the passages before us in his "New Translation" of the New Testament. Hebrews i. 3.—"When he had secured our purification from sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews x. 11, 12.—"While every priest stands daily at this service, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, sacrifices which never can take sins away—he offered a single sacrifice for sins, and then *seated himself* for all time *at the right hand of God.*"

THE SELF-OFFERING OF CHRIST.

In other letters of a slightly critical kind that I have received, assent has been expressed to the general exposition of the Bible doctrine about the work of Christ in the heavenlies. It is agreed that we must rule out any thought of His placating or propitiating the Father. But, a plea is put in for a "timeless" conception of Christ's self-offering. This seems to be something different from the implication of the Mass which is that the offering is continued in time—an event which happens whenever the Mass is offered.

It is difficult, however, to imagine what this "timeless"—or as others put it in distinction from "continual"—what this "eternal" offering can be. Does it mean that the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is eternally happening because, as some express it, it took place in a "timeless" world? If that is so, would not the same be true of any other of Christ's actions or experiences on earth? Would it not be true, say, of the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount, or of the healing of the paralytic, or of the washing of the disciples' feet?

¹Yet another correspondent, a First Class Classic, experienced in teaching, quotes the following rule,—“An aorist participle denoting that in which the action of a verb of past time consists may express time coincident with that of the verb when the actions of the verb and the participle are practically one.” Examples in the New Testament, are—ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν, St. Matt. xxii. 1; προσευξάμενοι εἶπαν, Acts i. 24; and καλῶς ἐποιήσας παραγενόμενος, Acts x. 33. My friend remarks, “All ‘these actions of the verb and the participle are practically one’—which can hardly be said of ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν.”

Would not precisely the same thing be true of any of our own past actions? If the term "offering" is used with reference to Christ in the sense in which it is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews it must refer to the suffering on the Cross, for, as has been shewn (p. 6), the author of the Epistle identifies the offering with the suffering, and expressly says that He suffered "once by the sacrifice of Himself." It is so that we speak in the Creed when we say, "He suffered under Pontius Pilate." We certainly do not mean that He suffered in a "timeless" world in such a way that His suffering under Pontius Pilate, and so His offering, is continually going on.¹

Of course it has to be borne in mind that all the Divine purposes and acts are "timeless" and "eternal," in the sense that with God there is neither past, present, nor future, but all is in the Eternal Now. Thus the Love of God which gave His only-begotten Son for the sins of the world belongs to timeless eternity. But the manifestation of that Love by the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection were all events within the sphere of time, and they were "once for all."

If all that is meant by the eternal self-offering of Christ is that, in Mind and Will, He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—that He is in disposition now what He was when He suffered on the Cross, that, of course, everyone must accept.

But more than this must be intended. What is it? We are told by some that "Christ's offering in heaven is a perpetual ever-present offering of life, whereof to have died is an ever-present and perpetual attribute." Here again we are puzzled. What is the purpose of such a perpetual offering of life? It is admitted that it is not to placate or to propitiate the Father nor to effect our reconciliation to God, which has already been effected on the Divine side. What then is it for? The phrase in common use is that Christ

¹Cf. Wharton B. Marriott in his correspondence with T. T. Carter, published under the title of *The Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist as set forth in a recent Declaration*—"The compound phrase of Christ 'offering Himself' is a technical phrase of Scripture, of unvarying meaning, having reference to the Sacrificial offering made by our Lord upon the Cross" (p. 75).

This little volume, read in conjunction with the *Memorials of W. B. Marriott*, edited by F. J. A. Hort, is of great present-day interest. Published in 1868, it shows how these contentions, which are revived from time to time, were conclusively answered 60 years ago. Hort, after paying a tribute—weighty from him—to the theological attainments and dialectical ability of W. B. Marriott, says, "He sought truth by patient and thoughtful labour, not by facile dogmatism, adopted or original," and adds, "The spirit of his life and writings is a spirit sorely needed for the repairing of the breaches of Christendom."

"pleads" His death. But what does such "pleading" mean? Must it not really mean, after all, to placate or to propitiate the Father—to make some favourable change in the Father's attitude towards us? Yet of this there is no hint in the Bible. It should make us pause when a scholar so careful in all his utterances as Dr. Hort says so positively, "The idea expressed in Wesley's hymn, 'Still His prevailing death He pleads,' has no Apostolic warrant and cannot even be reconciled with Apostolic doctrine" (p. 9). That hymn was quoted in the Church Assembly as an argument for accepting some expressions unwarranted by Scripture in the proposed alternative canon.¹ What justification have we for producing modern hymns by men however deserving of veneration as evidence of Christian truth supplementary to or even contradictory to Scripture? A similar objection to Dr. Hort's has been urged in a letter to me by a distinguished Biblical scholar against the hymn by Dr. Bright which, popular because of its devotional pathos and the tune to which it is sung, is answerable for wide-spread misconception about Christ's work in the heavenlies.

¹The objections to the alternative canon, which those who opposed it in the Church Assembly tried, as best they could, to express there, have been stated in detail since by one of the proctors, the Rev. C. Brooke Gwynne, M.A., in a pamphlet entitled *Criticisms on the Consecration Prayer in the New Prayer Book*. (Simpkin, Marshall & Co.), 6d.

The Assembly throughout the debates on the Prayer Book was impatient of any discussion of doctrinal points.

Reference may also be made to a critical examination of the alternative canon by the Right Rev. Bishop Knox, D.D., formerly Bishop of Manchester, under the title of *The Unscriptural Character of the Alternative Consecration Prayer?* (Longmans'), 6d.

Bishop Knox has a special claim to be heard on this question, not only on account of his academical qualifications, but also because he is one of the Bishops who first took the work of Prayer Book revision in hand. He was in the Upper House of York when that body unanimously resolved that there should be no change "in the sequence and structure of the Communion Office." Those Bishops clearly saw that any attempt to revise the central part of the Office would involve the risk of altering the balance of the doctrine of the Church of England, which would lead to division. The Lower House of the Convocation of York made an attempt, extended over several years, to produce a revised Communion Office, but eventually they abandoned the attempt and reverted to the position taken up from the start by the Upper House, because they found it impossible to frame a revised office which would be generally acceptable. It was utterly remote from the mind of Convocation at that time to divide the Fellowship by having two canons with different doctrinal implications.

" And now, O Father, mindful of the love
 That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's Tree,
 And having with us Him that pleads above,
 We here present, we here spread forth to Thee
 That only offering perfect in Thine eyes,
 The one, true, pure, immortal Sacrifice."

We are told by some, in support of such doctrine as this that we should look in the Eucharist to the heavenly sanctuary and now do what is being done there. What Bible authority is there for this, and what is its rationale? There is nothing about it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and it ought to have been there if anywhere. There is nothing about it in the Book of the Revelation. We do not read there of Jesus as a suppliant before an altar but as a "lamb in the midst of the throne," "the Centrepiece of the whole tableau" (Swete on Rev. iv. 6). Moreover, there is not the most remote allusion to the Eucharist in any part of the Revelation.

If it is said that we must think of Jesus as risen and ascended, so assuredly did St. Paul always. "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know we Him so no more" (2 Cor. v. 16). Yet he has nothing to say to us about a pleading by Christ of His death in the heavenly sanctuary or of any association with it of the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

The passages in which St. Paul refers to the Eucharist contain no allusion to any sacrifice in Heaven. In the Revelation there is, as Dr. Charles has convincingly proved, only one altar, and that an altar of incense. The Lamb Who is on the throne is not being sacrificed, but "has been sacrificed." The sacrifice is even in Heaven a thing of the past.¹

¹ In this connection it may be remarked that there is need of much fresh and clear thought on the whole subject of the Jewish conception of sacrifice, with a reconsideration of such terms as "redemption," "propitiation," and "covenant," to which meanings have often been attached that are unwarranted by Hebrew idiom and usage. The Hebrew in his use of a metaphor looked to the effect rather than to the process. He would speak, for instance, of the deliverance of a person from captivity as redemption, even though there was no payment of a ransom.

There has been much co-operative study on this subject of late, and the result must be taken into account in any fruitful attempt to enquire into the true meaning and purport of the sacrifice of Christ and of the relation to it of the Holy Communion. Reference may be made to the volume of essays entitled *The People and the Book, to Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, by the late Dr. George Buchanan Gray, and to the specially valuable pamphlet on *Sacrifice* by the Rev. Professor Kennett, D.D. (Simpkin, Marshall & Co.), 6d.

Apparently there is some confusion of thought in this reluctance to give up the idea of Christ's pleading of His sacrifice, which shows how there lingers in men's minds the old forensic notion of the Atonement, rejected though it be in theory now by all scholars.¹

The idea is probably associated in men's imaginations with our unworthiness before God and our utter dependence on Christ. That utter dependence, as I have pointed out (p. 20), is movingly expressed in our old Communion Office in language that is fully accordant with Scripture. "Plainly it raises the whole conception of the Sacrament and of our part in it to a higher level when our chief aim in the service is, not by some ritual act to make God propitious to us or to remind Him of that of which He has no need to be reminded, but rather to seek through the Spirit to fit ourselves by penitence, self-devotion, and intense thankfulness to receive the sacred gifts which God offers us as the means and pledge of our communion with Him."²

Not man's search for God but God's gracious approach to sinful man is the truly distinctive note of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "The Bible tells us not how we should talk with God, but what He says to us ; not how we find the way to Him, but how He has sought and found the way to us." We reverse this order when in the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ we lay the chief stress on the "sacrifice," with or without participation of the sacred gifts, as though the essential thing were to make God favourable to us ; whereas He is and was always favourable to us—the Cross of Christ is the great proof of this—and He only longs that we by our faith and true penitence should be able to enter into spiritual fellowship

¹The forensic theory, in which God is thought of rather as Judge than as Father, and which, as the term denotes, was partly suggested by the procedure of ordinary law courts, was associated in its origin with the belief that physical death was the penal consequence of sin, to which there is no reference in the recorded sayings of Jesus. For a statement of the theological and moral objections to the theory, with a recognition of the elements of truth which underlay it, and with a convincing exposition of the various passages of Scripture which relate to the sacrifice of Christ, reference could hardly be made to a more clearly reasoned and devotionally stimulating book than *The Cross of Christ*, by D. M. Ross, D.D. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

²*The Word and Sacraments*, p. 51. See, further, on the principles underlying the construction of our present Office, *The Meaning of the Order for Holy Communion*, by Professor J. F. Bethune-Baker, D.D. (Simpkin, Marshall and Co.), 6d. ; and *Eucharist and Sacrifice*, by Professor F. C. Burkitt, D.D. (Cambridge, W. Heffer), 1/-.

with Him in Christ. It is exactly that which is provided for in our present service, and is not so noticeable as the general discussion, and we may have a good hope that in the course of time, will be that devout and pious the Anglican Communion will begin to be the Church of England instituted a form of service—in theology, in worship, and in ecclesiology—into a Communion.”

APPENDIX

exactly the sort of approach to God that
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